

Appl. No. 10/815,471
Amdt. dated April 25, 2006
Reply to Office Action of January 4, 2006

PATENT

Amendments to the Drawings:

The attached sheet of drawings includes changes to Fig. 4. This sheet, which includes Fig. 4 replaces the original sheet including Fig. 4. In Fig. 4, the leadline from reference number 32 points to a biasing element shown in FIG. 4.

Attachment: Replacement Sheet
Annotated Sheet Showing Change

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REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

This Amendment is responsive to the Office Action mailed on January 4, 2006. A petition for a 1 month extension of time is attached.

In this Amendment, claims 1, 7, and 13 are amended, and claims 3-6 are amended so that they are in independent form. New claims 19-20 are added so that claims 1-20 are pending.

At page 3 of the Office Action, claims 3-6, 9-12, and 15-18 are indicated as having allowable subject matter. The Examiner is thanked for the indication of allowable subject matter.

At page 2 of the Office Action, the drawings are objected to because the element "32" has allegedly been used to designate both the springs (FIG. 3) and wedge structure element (FIG. 4). Applicants disagree, but have attached hereto an amended version of FIG. 4. In the amended version, the leadline leading from reference number 32 is connected to the biasing element shown in FIG. 4.

Claims 1-2, 7-8, and 13-14 are rejected as being anticipated by Hostetter (U.S. Patent No. 2,676,225). This rejection is traversed. Although the rejection is traversed and is believed to be improper, Applicant has amended independent claims 1, 7, and 13 to expedite the prosecution of the application.

Independent claims 1, 7, and 13 now recite a locking assembly including "a wedge shaped structure, wherein the wedge shaped structure is configured to be received in the receiving region of the second member, and wherein movement of the wedge shaped structure in a first forward direction moves the interfering portion of the interference element upward into the receiving area of the first member and wherein movement of the wedge shaped structure in a second backward direction causes the interfering portion of the interference element to move downward out of the receiving area of the first member." FIGS. 1 and 2 in the present application illustrate the relative movements of the wedge shaped structure and the interfering portion of the interference element. For example, wedge shaped structure 26 can move forward in a direction X to push the interference portion 16(a) upward into a receiving area 14(a). The

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wedge shaped structure 26 can also move backward in a direction Y, thereby causing the interference portion 16(b) to move downward out of the receiving area 14(a). A locking assembly including such components is not taught or suggested by Hostetter.

The Examiner refers to Hostetter's plug 66 as being a "cam" and that element 38 is a "wedge shaped structure. Assuming *arguendo* that the plug 66 is a "cam" and that element 38 is a "wedge shaped structure," the alleged "wedge shaped structure" 38 does not move forward and backward, thereby causing a separate interference element with in interference portion to move upward into and downward out of a receiving area. Since Hostetter does not teach or suggest a locking assembly including "a wedge shaped structure, wherein the wedge shaped structure is configured to be received in the receiving region of the second member, and wherein movement of the wedge shaped structure in a first forward direction moves the interfering portion of the interference element upward into the receiving area of the first member and wherein movement of the wedge shaped structure in a second backward direction causes the interfering portion of the interference element to move downward out of the receiving area of the first member", Hostetter does not anticipate or obviate independent claims 1, 7, and 13, or any claims dependent thereon.

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CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicants believe all claims now pending in this Application are in condition for allowance. The issuance of a formal Notice of Allowance at an early date is respectfully requested.

If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application, please telephone the undersigned at 415-576-0200.

Respectfully submitted